



# The Historic District's Past

The 12.3 acre Crystal Cove Historic District is a well-preserved example of Southern California vernacular beach architecture and terrain. The District retains the scale and ambiance of a 1930's beach resort.

"Crystal Cove" was named in 1927 by Elizabeth Wood "because the name seemed right for such a beautiful place." The site was always a favorite spot of the owners and James Irvine II and James Irvine III, who spent much time enjoying the beach setting. They generously allowed employees and friends to build small shelters and cottages along the beach and against the bluffs.

During these years, the cottages were close to the creek that drained Los Trancos Canyon. Tents were pitched on the beach. A parking area for cars was developed at the foot of the canyon. Sometime in the 1920's, a lumber ship capsized and wood suitable for construction of more cottages drifted ashore.

It became a tradition for many families who had enjoyed the Cove since the 1920's to return to this favored place each summer. The Irvine Family had been generous with permission for the construction of the cottages that still line the beach today, virtually unchanged. In the late 1930's as the cottage owners made improvements and lengthened their stay, the Irvine Family decided that those with cottages must make a choice. They were invited to either move their cottages elsewhere or to relinquish ownership and lease their cottages from the Irvine Company.

This short term leasing system actually served to preserve Crystal Cove in its original form since the leases specified that no dimensional changes could be made to the cottages. This single act insured that the area appears much as it did in the 1920's with the exception of the absence of seasonal visitors who are no longer allowed to pitch tents on the beach.

In 1979, the State of California purchased the land from the Irvine Company to become a state park named after Crystal Cove. It was the California State Parks Department that nominated the cottage district for the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

## Crystal Cove Film History

In the 1920's, the primitive and beautiful Crystal Cove attracted the attention of the booming silent film industry. Palm trees are shown as early as 1917 in photographs, and a "paradise of the south seas" was created for film makers who could easily reach this location by rail and spare themselves the expense of an actual location trip. Small cottages were built and thatched with palms, and Crystal Cove took on the exotic appearance of Hawaii or Tahiti. For years every cottage built at Crystal Cove kept its palm thatch, because the needs of the filmmakers were considered.

Films reportedly shot here include ***Rain, Treasure Island, Haifa Bridge, and White Shadows of the South Seas***. At Table Rock, located at the southern most end of Crystal Cove, the film ***Storm Tossed*** was made in 1921.



# Crystal Cove State Park Historic District: Walking Tour



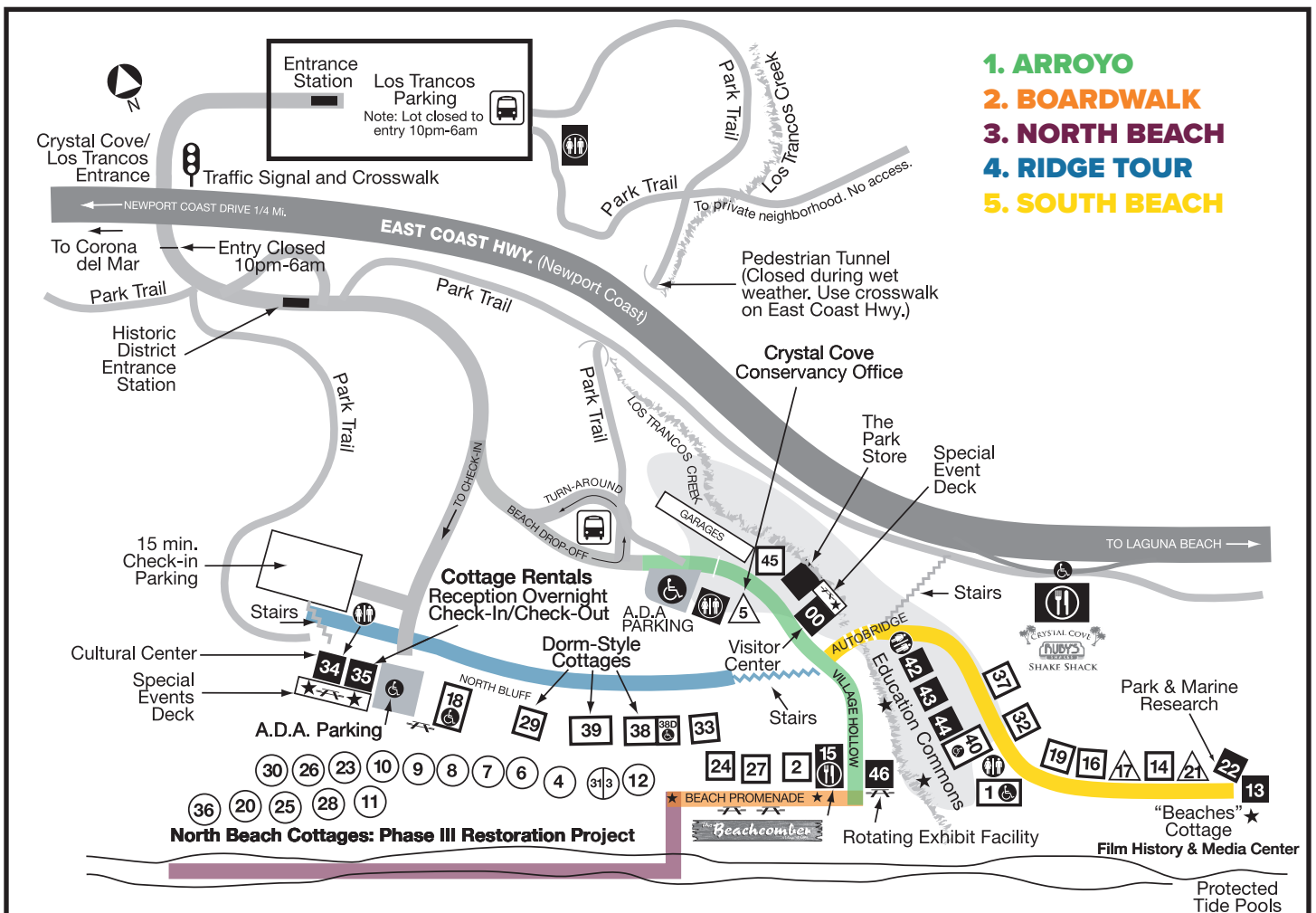
The 12 acres of the Crystal Cove Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, listing 46 cottages of vernacular architecture - meaning structures without specific design. Of literally dozens of such beach communities, ranging from Northern California to San Diego, Crystal Cove stands out as the only one that has endured. All the others are gone now and even greater significance is the fact that Crystal Cove has remained unchanged for 50 years.

The first cottages were built as early as 1917, but of those that remain, the oldest is dated 1921. From that time up until 1940, the cottages were built from collections of wood and pieces of older houses that were brought down to the cove. Sometime in the 1920s a lumber-

ship capsized and the wood drifted ashore, providing additional building materials for the residents.

During the 1920s the primitive and beautiful setting of the cove attracted the silent film industry for south seas productions. Palm trees and thatched cottages show up in photographs as early as 1917. Also during the 1920s, the rum-runners frequently smuggled ashore during the Prohibition Era. Bottles were found in the sands for years after the era ended.

As you enter the Historic District tour, follow the arroyo to the beach. Cottages are numbered with the order that natural gas was installed. Dates are the earliest built; names are the families that occupied them.





## Arroyo - Start at the Garages



### Garages, 1931-37

Green vertical slats; some with newspaper insulation. There is a long row structure and one single garage, where there were once two. One garage was even used as a residence. *State Parks and Concessions Operational Support.*

### Cottage #5, 1928

**Boatman** - Two Story, Brown Shingle. Originally thatched, the second story was constructed by 1937 and the cottage completed by 1940. It has its own garage. *State Parks and Concessions Operational Support.*

### Cottage #45, 1928

**Killen** - Single story green board box. This was the first store, moved here in 1950 from the beach. The original door is behind the crossed oars. State Parks and Concessions Operational Support. The Store, the Historic District's interpretive store, is located next to Cottage #45. Open daily, The Store features plein air art, jewelry and children's educational items.

### Cottage #00-Office, 1928

**Falzetti** - Single story duplex; light yellow. The office from 1928 until 1982 when the State Park took over, the arroyo was then rechanneled behind the building. Originally with a thatched roof, there a third of the building was removed in 1937. *Visitor Center.*

### Autobridge, 1930s

The original bridge had guard posts added by 1940. A footbridge was added later in the 1940s between the auto bridge and the shore. The footbridge was removed and the auto bridge rebuilt by the State Park service.

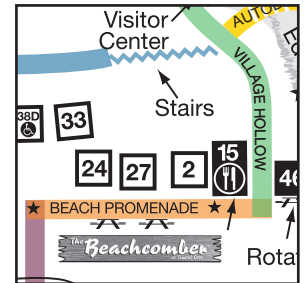
### Original Store, 1950

Single story, vertical board in aqua marine (originally khaki). A seasonal store, built in the style of many earlier cottages. Open generally from May to September. *Now a rotating Exhibit Facility.*

## North Beach Tour - Turn Right onto the Promenade

### Cottage #15, 1938

**Falzetti** - Single story, aqua marine board & batten with low pitch roof. The original square building had the porch enclosed in the 1940s and then added the board & batten facade. The Beachcomber restaurant is open Saturday 7am each day and serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.



### Cottage #2, 1926

**Davick** - Single story, elevated brown shingle. Original gable in place. Front porch enclosed and facade added in the mid 1940s. Added side wing. *Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #27, 1933

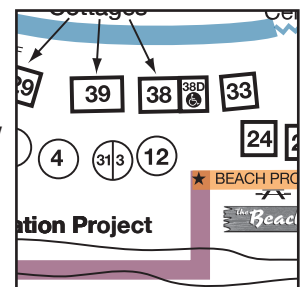
**Rowland** - Hillside single story, brown shingle. The original layout is unaltered. The siding and shingles were added sometime after 1937. The front steps and porch cover are new. *Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #24, 1932

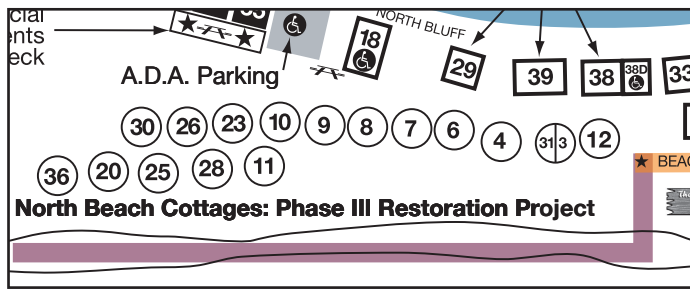
**O'Brien/Heintz** - Hillside single story, brown shingle. The original stairway on the left is gone and the front facade is new. *Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #12, 1930

**VanWyck** - Elevated, large white two-story. Originally a single story building, the second story was added in the late 1930s. Features a row of trolley windows from San Diego. *Future Cottage Rental.*



## Boardwalk - Continue out on the sand



### Cottage #3, 1930

**VanPelt** (Split cottage) - Single story, duplex brown shingle. Cottage #3 was split in the 1940s, added the enclosed porch. Originally a single unit.

### Cottage #31, 1940s

**Benson**. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #4, 1930

**Bartel** - Hillside two story, white ship lap siding. Originally a single story, with a double gable front; made with 1 x 4 Redwood siding. The second story and side addition were completed in 1937. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #6, 1930

**Combs** - Hillside single story, brown shingle. Originally board and batten, the porch and left side were enclosed by 1937. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #7, 1930

**Carter** - Single story, brown shingle. Originally smaller; enlarged in the mid 1940s. Fully modernized interior. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #8, 1930

**Shatford** - Single story, brown shingle. Front porch and rear wing were added by 1937; the rear was added in the mid 1940s. Small room under the porch. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #9, 1930

**Barnard** - Hillside single story, red board and batten. Originally square, the front porch was once enclosed. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #10, 1930

**Lawson** - Hillside single story, yellow lapped siding. Original shape was a rectangle. Modified in 1937 to an ell; modified and enlarged again in the 1940s. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #11, 1930

**Gabriel** - Two story, multi-gabled white lap & white shingle. This cottage also contains the original wood frame windows and a second story box bay. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #23, 1932.

**Shirley** - Hillside single story, white board and batten. Late 1930s added a sun porch and the small addition to the right side came in the 1940s. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #28, 1930s

**VanDeKamp/O'Connell** - Single story, white board and batten. Relatively unchanged since the 1930s; the fireplace was added around 1950. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #26, 1933

**Shirley** - Hillside two story, gray composition shingle. Early 1940s additions include the deck and the enclosure of the sun porch. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #25, 1933

**McGraw** - Single story, white board and batten. The large porch was added in the 1940s, note the shed-like addition at the rear. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #30, 1936

**Willinger** - Hillside two story, tan board and batten. Multi-gabled with a square bay, the front porch was enclosed in the 1940s. *Future Cottage Rental.*

### Cottage #20, 1933

**Clement** - Two story, brown painted shingle. With the lower story made of board and bats, the overhang porch was added in the mid 1940s. It has its own garage. *Future Cottage Rental.*

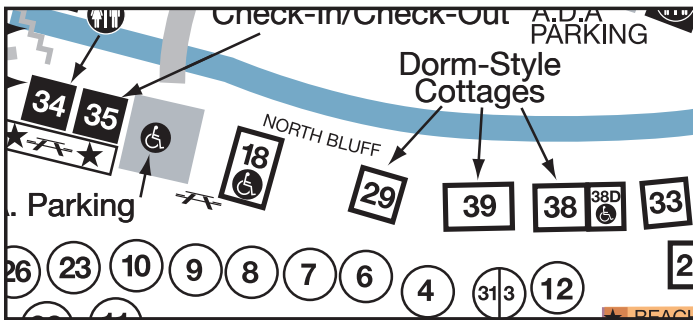
### Cottage #36, 1938

**Stinson** - Single story, combination white vertical/horizontal tapped siding. A late era style cottage with small right side addition. *Future Cottage Rental.*

## Return to the Autobody



## Ridge - Go up stairs



### Cottage #33, 1940.

**Province/Goldberg** - Single story, unpainted board. Small, rectangular cottage with the west side added in the 1950s. Does not fit into the historical interpretive period. *Cottage Rental*. Four small units were constructed in the 1930s as rentals. Cottage #41 is gone and Cottage #44 was later enlarged.

### Cottage #35, 1945

**Thobe** - Single story, blue shiplap siding. This is the newest cottage in the district and does not fit into the historical interpretive period. The lean-to was a later addition. *Reception and overnight check-in*.

### Cottage #18, 1921

**Star/Rippy** - Single story, gray asphalt shingles. Listed as the oldest existing structure in the district. Original vertical board siding is now covered; the porch was enclosed in the late 1930s. *Cottage Rental - ADA Only*. Down the road to the right is the garage for Cottage #30.

### Cottage #29, 1935

**Benson** - Single story, gray shingles. Extensively modified, the left wing was added in the late 1930s and the right in the early 1940s. *Dorm Style Cottage*.

### Cottage #39, 1924

**Hodges/Luckenbill/Ogden** - Single story, white shiplap. Moved to the district in the late 1930s; the patio is a recent addition. *Dorm Style Cottage*.

### Cottage #38, 1939

**Ramsey** - Single story, brown shingle. Original cottage is now surrounded by the new building. North wing was added much later. *Dorm Style Cottage, includes one ADA room*.

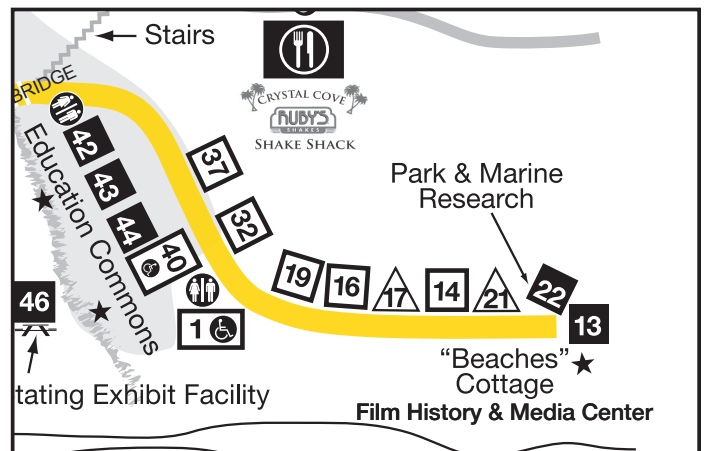
### Cottage #34, 1934

**Weber/Davis** - Single story, gray shiplap. Modified to home use, the original entrance is now a shower, the rear room was added and the separate building added. Moved here from the bluff, this was a Japanese School house. Used by the children of the farming families, the cottage was moved here during WWII (1942?) after the Japanese were relocated. *Cultural Center*.

## Return to the Autobridge

## South Beach Tour

## Turn onto Autobridge



### Cottage #41, 1930s - Gone

### Cottage #42, 1930

**Hiatt** - Small two story, brown shingle. Original board and batten siding now covered. Large lower patio adjacent to the arroyo. *Outdoor Educational Commons*.

### Cottage #43, 1934

**Matthews** - Two story, blue board and batten. Original form. Lower patio adjacent to the arroyo. *Outdoor Educational Commons*.

### Cottage #44, 1937

**Mitchell/Larsen** - Two story duplex, yellow. Heavily modified, this cottage was one of the four original rental units. Lower patio adjacent to the arroyo. *Outdoor Educational Commons*.



### Cottage #37, 1938

**Dana** - Elevated single story, brown tongue & groove. One of the later cottages built, several modifications including windows; the roof has been converted into a deck. Has its own garage. Cottage Rental.

### Cottage #32, 1936

**Powell** - Elevated single story, white board & batten. In its original state, this cottage is typical of early beach construction. *Cottage Rental*.

### Cottage # 1, 1936

**Donahue** - Large single story, white shingle siding. Cottage # 1 only by the order of gas installation. With an addition at the front, this cottage has seen changes including a modified roof line. Picket fence surrounds. *Cottage Rental - ADA only*.

### Cottage #40, 1930

**Dillinger/Livermore/Thompson** - (Hidden in front of #1) - Single story, with white siding. Moved into the district in the 1940s, this cottage has had a few changes and the addition of a porch.

### Cottage #19, 1931

**Flynn** - Elevated single story. Modified extensively including windows, the deck was added in the 1950s. Recent enclosure of the front porch. *Future Cottage Rental*.

### Cottage #16, 1930

**Padve/Martin** - Two story, gray asphalt siding. Originally a single story, the second level was added by 1937. Other modifications came in the 1960s including the front deck and window frames. *Future Cottage Rental*.

### Cottage #17, 1931

**Pilaria** - Single story, yellow with red trim. Relatively unmodified since 1937, this cottage now has a glassed-in patio. *State Parks Operations*.

### Cottage #14, 1931

**McCloskey** - Two story, grey shingle. Original cottage was a rectangle with a low gable. There were four additions prior to 1937, the deck and garage were added in the early 1940s, and the windows and glass door was added in the 1960s. *State Parks Operations*.

### Cottage #21, 1931

**Barnard** - Single story, lap white siding. The Bay window seems to be an addition but the remainder of the building is original. The fencing came after the 1940s. *State Parks Operations*.

### Cottage #22, 1931c

**Taft** - Elevated single story, blue/green redwood siding. Heavy alterations in the 1960s created an enclosed patio over the garage, a large deck and brought aluminum windows. *Marine Research Facility*.

### Cottage #13, The Beaches Cottage. 1930s

**Lowe** - Two story, brown shingle. With the original sash windows in place and the adjacent outhouses, this cottage looks much as it did 60 years ago. Expanded in the 1930s, the original house was small and square. (The movie *Beaches* was filmed here.) *Future restoration*.

